

That's why I support this amendment today. I fully recognize the need to provide our law enforcement officers with the tools necessary to combat terrorism and keep Americans safe. However, security bought at the price of the freedoms on which our Nation was founded is no real security at all. Certain parts of the Patriot Act, including Section 215, may have seemed understandable in the short term, but they are intolerable over time. We need to set things right before our precious constitutional rights are eroded beyond recognition.

We sacrifice something much more dear than our physical safety when we fail to be diligent in defending our freedoms. Once lost, they seldom if ever are regained. And whether the tyranny that robs me of my liberties comes from abroad or starts here at home makes no difference. It is equally unwelcome. I am just as committed to protecting Americans from their own government's excesses as from the violence of foreign extremists.

The degree to which that commitment has captured America's imagination and has found growing support here among my colleagues is one of the most gratifying experiences in my public life. A vote for this amendment is a vote to restore Americans' confidence in the ability of Congress to protect the freedoms they hold dear.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) will be postponed.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) addresses a portion of the bill that has been passed in the reading. Does the gentleman ask for unanimous consent for its consideration at this point in the reading?

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I do.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to its consideration at this point in the reading?

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I object.

The CHAIRMAN. Objection is heard.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield.

Mr. WOLF. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

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Mr. SMITH of Michigan. This amendment would take money from the United Nations and would put that \$20 million in NIST, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, at a level

that was recommended by the President.

I am offering this amendment, taking money from the United Nations appropriations, international organizations and, because I am concerned about the additional money that the United Nations has taken and has in their possession from the Oil-for-Food program.

I think this Congress should be very concerned about what has happened in the Oil-for-Food program. This particular line item appropriation was increased 19.4 percent above last year, even though there are reports that the U.N. kept \$100 million of the Oil-for-Food money to pay for its own operating expenses. This money was intended to rebuild Iraq, but instead the American taxpayer is currently paying the tab.

Also, the U.N. collected .8 percent of the Oil-for-Food transactions to pay for weapons inspections, but between 1999 and 2002, the U.N. collected \$400 million for weapons inspection, even though no inspections took place.

So that is where the \$20 million would come from. It goes to increase the appropriation up to the President's request for the National Institute of Standards and Technology, NIST.

You know, it is a simple amendment that I think is fair, that I would hope would be in order so that this body could consider how far we wanted to go increasing some of the appropriations to the United Nations, again by 19.4 percent at a time when it is reported that they have, in effect, confiscated \$400 million for weapons inspections that they did not make; at a time when they have taken another \$100 million off according to an article in the Wall Street Journal, to pay for their own administrative expenses.

I think it is reasonable and appropriate that we send a signal to the United Nations that we are not going to have this dramatic 19.4 percent increase in those kind of appropriations, at a time when the United Nations has issued orders apparently to not release the background of the Oil-for-Food program, when countries that were involved in the Oil-for-Food program such as Russia, such as France, such as some of the other countries that now have instructed their people not to release the information so that we can appropriately investigate what happened in the misuse of that Oil-for-Food program funds.

Recently, both my Agriculture and International Relations Committees held hearings on the United Nations' Oil-for-Food (OFF) program scandal. That program taught us a lot about the United Nations' (UN) weaknesses and explain the actions of countries like France and Russia when they worked against us last year.

The UN placed trade sanctions on Iraq after Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1991. By 1995, the sanctions were widely blamed for a developing humanitarian crisis in Iraq. The United States and Britain realized that Iraq, which has the second largest oil reserves in the world, could trade oil for food and medi-

cine. We pushed for UN Security Council Resolution 986, and the OFF program was created. If effective, it would have reduced the humanitarian impact of the sanctions while preventing Hussein from buying weapons.

Unfortunately, Hussein cheated OFF and the UN didn't stop it. He managed to get his hands on at least \$10 billion of OFF money. Other countries were complicit in helping him cheat. France and Russia demanded that we let Hussein design OFF. It allowed Hussein to pick the price for his oil, to pick his customers, and to control the people who audited him. Within a few years, the flawed program allowed Hussein to sell at low prices in exchange for kickbacks that were funneled into Swiss bank accounts. This was suspected at the time, but it was impossible to fix it. Fixing it would have required unanimous support of the Permanent Members of the Security Council, including France and Russia. At the time, these countries said that they wanted to end the sanctions completely. France, Russia, and China all had oil contracts with Iraq that would have been activated, resulting in huge benefits for these countries had the sanctions been removed.

At the same time, UN bureaucrats in Iraq were slow to file reports and bring irregularities to the attention of the Security Council and its oversight committee. Furthermore, Iraq paid its UN auditors. The more trading they allowed, the more money the UN got. These arrangements have only come to light since Saddam Hussein's fall. There are reports that even the UN's head of the Oil-for-Food program, Benon Sevan, was on the take from Hussein.

The United States and Britain have pushed for an audit to find out what happened. Paul Volcker, a former Chairman of the Federal Reserve, is heading a UN investigation. However, the UN is stonewalling. Sevan sent letters ordering UN offices to refuse to cooperate. Russia has asserted that it will not release any documents. And other UN bureaucrats have refused to share papers. I have sponsored legislation that would cut U.S. support for the UN if it doesn't cooperate.

The real story here is that many countries make decisions based solely on what is good for their country, with no regard for the goals and ideals of the UN Charter. Certainly, this calls the Security Council's moral authority into question and degrades its capacity to respond appropriately to events. Is it any wonder that, under pressure from these countries, UN could not agree to support us in Iraq? And is it any wonder that at the first threat of danger, the UN pulled out? We need to carry out a full and thorough investigation and make changes if the United States is to continue with some degree of confidence.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, we can proceed to the point of order. I would hope that inasmuch as this amendment was included in the unanimous consent to be allowed to be considered, that we would allow my amendment to be considered.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to question the ruling of the chair on whether or not the amendment has been passed.

The CHAIRMAN. The unanimous consent request to consider the amendment at this point was objected to. The amendment is not pending.